

**Maryland Historical Trust**  
**State Historic Sites Inventory Form**

MARYLAND INVENTORY OF  
HISTORIC PROPERTIES

Survey No. B-4383

Magi No.

DOE ☐ yes ☐ no

**1. Name** (indicate preferred name)

historic 203 West Saratoga Street

and/or common Top Dog Custom Jewelry

**2. Location**

street & number 203 W. Saratoga Street ☐ not for publication

city, town Baltimore ☐ vicinity of ☐ congressional district Seventh

state Maryland ☐ county Baltimore

**3. Classification**

Category	Ownership	Status	Present Use
<input type="checkbox"/> district	<input type="checkbox"/> public	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> occupied	<input type="checkbox"/> agriculture <input type="checkbox"/> museum
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> building(s)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> private	<input type="checkbox"/> unoccupied	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> commercial <input type="checkbox"/> park
<input type="checkbox"/> structure	<input type="checkbox"/> both	<input type="checkbox"/> work in progress	<input type="checkbox"/> educational <input type="checkbox"/> private residence
<input type="checkbox"/> site	<b>Public Acquisition</b>	<b>Accessible</b>	<input type="checkbox"/> entertainment <input type="checkbox"/> religious
<input type="checkbox"/> object	<input type="checkbox"/> in process	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> yes: restricted	<input type="checkbox"/> government <input type="checkbox"/> scientific
	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> being considered	<input type="checkbox"/> yes: unrestricted	<input type="checkbox"/> industrial <input type="checkbox"/> transportation
	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> not applicable	<input type="checkbox"/> no	<input type="checkbox"/> military <input type="checkbox"/> other:

**4. Owner of Property** (give names and mailing addresses of all owners)

name Jeweler's Service Co.

street & number 229 Park Avenue

city, town Baltimore ☐ telephone no.: MD 21201

☐ state and zip code

**5. Location of Legal Description**

courthouse, registry of deeds Baltimore City Courthouse SEB608

street & number 100 N. Calvert Street, Room 610 folio 425

city, town Baltimore ☐ state MD

**6. Representation in Existing** Historical Surveys

title

date ☐ federal ☐ state ☐ county ☐ local

pository for survey records

city, town ☐ state

## 7. Description

Survey No. B-4383

### Condition

☐ excellent  
☒ good  
☐ fair

☐ deteriorated  
☐ ruins  
☐ unexposed

### Check one

☐ unaltered  
☒ altered

### Check one

☒ original site  
☐ moved      date of move \_\_\_\_\_

Prepare both a summary paragraph and a general description of the resource and its various elements as it exists today.

Resource Count: 1

This circa 1875 shed-roofed commercial building faces north on W. Saratoga Street and abuts two partywall buildings. The three-bay, three-story building is part of a brick commercial block. This independent section, defined by seams in the brick work and fenestration, has a street frontage of 18' and a depth of 50'.

The first story has been altered. To the east is a white and rust tiled recessed vestibule containing two doors. There is an original door with a glass panel above and two wood panels below. A mail slot with ornamental shelf is cut into wood pane. The transom bar has a dentil row. The transom is now blocked. A pilaster runs up the east side, a plain board runs up the west side. A second glass door with wood surrounds abuts the board. The remainder of the facade is an angled display window. The first plate of glass angles out toward the street; the second plate is flush with the plane of the facade. The window is set above a foundation of wood panelling. A projecting cornice runs across the first story. The profile consists of fillet, ogee, bead, back band, dentil course, ogee and fillets. It is flanked by scrolled brackets at either end; the bracket to the west has rosette crest. The area above the first story is covered by a plastic boxed sign.

The second and third stories have three 1/1 sash windows with wood sills and brick splayed jack arches.

The wood cornice is very elaborate. It has molding with a fillet, ogee, fillet, and back band profile projecting over a row of scrolled brackets with fine details. A row of raised molding and two rows of corbelled jig-sawn and drilled leaf molding run below. A brick band terminates the bottom of the cornice. Large brackets bisect the cornice into two bays. The bold, scrolled brackets have applied rosettes on the projecting arms.

The interior of the first story is finished with wallboard and an acoustical tile ceiling. The interior of the stair hall has a door cut into the west to link it with the first story. The stairs rise straight back along the east wall.

# 8. Significance

Survey No. B-4383

Period	Areas of Significance—Check and justify below			
<input type="checkbox"/> prehistoric	<input type="checkbox"/> archeology-prehistoric	<input type="checkbox"/> community planning	<input type="checkbox"/> landscape architecture	<input type="checkbox"/> religion
<input type="checkbox"/> 1400-1499	<input type="checkbox"/> archeology-historic	<input type="checkbox"/> conservation	<input type="checkbox"/> law	<input type="checkbox"/> science
<input type="checkbox"/> 1500-1599	<input type="checkbox"/> agriculture	<input type="checkbox"/> economics	<input type="checkbox"/> literature	<input type="checkbox"/> sculpture
<input type="checkbox"/> 1600-1699	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> architecture	<input type="checkbox"/> education	<input type="checkbox"/> military	<input type="checkbox"/> social/
<input type="checkbox"/> 1700-1799	<input type="checkbox"/> art	<input type="checkbox"/> engineering	<input type="checkbox"/> music	<input type="checkbox"/> humanitarian
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1800-1899	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> commerce	<input type="checkbox"/> exploration/settlement	<input type="checkbox"/> philosophy	<input type="checkbox"/> theater
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1900-	<input type="checkbox"/> communications	<input type="checkbox"/> industry	<input type="checkbox"/> politics/government	<input type="checkbox"/> transportation
		<input type="checkbox"/> invention		<input type="checkbox"/> other (specify)

Specific dates Builder/Architect unknown

check: Applicable Criteria: ☐ A ☐ B ☒ C ☐ D  
and/or

Applicable Exception: ☐ A ☐ B ☐ C ☐ D ☐ E ☐ F ☐ G

Level of Significance: ☐ national ☐ state ☒ local

Prepare both a summary paragraph of significance and a general statement of history and support.

This three-bay, three-story building is a simple example of speculative commercial block construction along Saratoga Street during the third quarter of the nineteenth century. It is partnered with a matching mate, but the two units are separated by a brick seam indicating separate stages of construction, and have separate entrances and separate alterations to the buildings. The building's style and massing are representative of the late nineteenth-century rowhouses and partywall structures on the block. A few elements of Victorian fashion are still visible. The first story has been altered, but the nineteenth-century stringcourse-cornice remains in place. The first-story cornice was a common feature to commercial buildings in the nineteenth century and often served to demarcate the commercial from the residential zones. The first story would have been used for sales or display area and the upper stories would have been used as dwellings. The upper stories are sparsely treated, with brick lintels and stone sills. The cornice (which it shares with its row neighbor) is Italianate: modestly overhanging eaves are supported by small modillion brackets and bay-defining scrolled brackets, a common way of decoratively capping the top of a building.

The inset vestibule containing two entrances suggests that the building was constructed to hold more than one tenant, and that separate entrances were desirable. This separation of zones and access further suggest that the first-story was used commercially and the upstairs either as offices or residences. The presence of mixed commercial/residential use indicates the mixed character of this Baltimore neighborhood in the late nineteenth century. Architectural historian Richard Longstreth writes that "Shop-houses prevailed in emerging commercial centers of cities and towns alike through the early decades of the 19th century. Examples can still be seen in areas that have not experienced radical change, even

## 9. Major Bibliographical References

Survey No. B-4383

Richard Longstreth, The Buildings of Main Street (Washington: Preservation Press, 1987).

## 10. Geographical Data

Acreage of nominated property \_\_\_\_\_

Quadrangle name Baltimore East Quad

Quadrangle scale \_\_\_\_\_

UTM References do NOT complete UTM references

A 

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Zone Easting Northing

B 

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Zone Easting Northing

C 

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D 

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E 

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F 

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G 

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H 

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Verbal boundary description and justification

List all states and counties for properties overlapping state or county boundaries

state	code	county	code
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state	code	county	code
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## 11. Form Prepared By

name/title Diane Shaworganization CHAP, Room 1037date December 19, 1991street & number 417 E. Fayette Streettelephone 301-396-4866city or town Baltimorestate MD

The Maryland Historic Sites Inventory was officially created by an Act of the Maryland Legislature to be found in the Annotated Code of Maryland, Article 41, Section 181 KA, 1974 supplement.

The survey and inventory are being prepared for information and record purposes only and do not constitute any infringement of individual property rights.

return to: Maryland Historical Trust  
Shaw House  
21 State Circle  
Annapolis, Maryland 21401  
(301) 269-2438

MARYLAND HISTORICAL TRUST  
DHCP/DHCD  
100 COMMUNITY PLACE  
CROWNSVILLE, MD 21032-2023  
301-514-7600



B-4383  
203 West Saratoga Street  
Baltimore MD  
Section 8 Significance  
8.1

though the shopfronts themselves have almost always been altered.  
. . the upper section retaining a domestic character."<sup>1</sup>

The alterations to the first story suggest that the commercial needs and aesthetics changed over the twentieth century. Larger windows were inserted and the Victorian ornamentation was covered with low-maintenance mock wood siding. Longstreth continues, "the gradual abandonment of the shop-house as the dominant form of commercial architecture was due to the ever-increasing demands for trade and professional services along with a corresponding increase in land values, all of which fostered the design of buildings used entirely for commercial purposes."<sup>2</sup> In this case, however, the residential component was maintained, revealing the lack of commercial pressures over time.

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<sup>1</sup> Longstreth, Buildings of Main Street, p. 24.

<sup>2</sup> Longstreth, The Buildings of Main Street, pp. 24, 29.

**COMPREHENSIVE PLAN DATA**

HISTORIC CONTEXT:

Geographic Organization:  
Piedmont

Chronological/Developmental Period:

Industrial?Urban Dominance, 1879-1930

Historic Period Themes:  
Architecture  
Economics

Resource Type:  
Building

Historic Environment:  
Urban

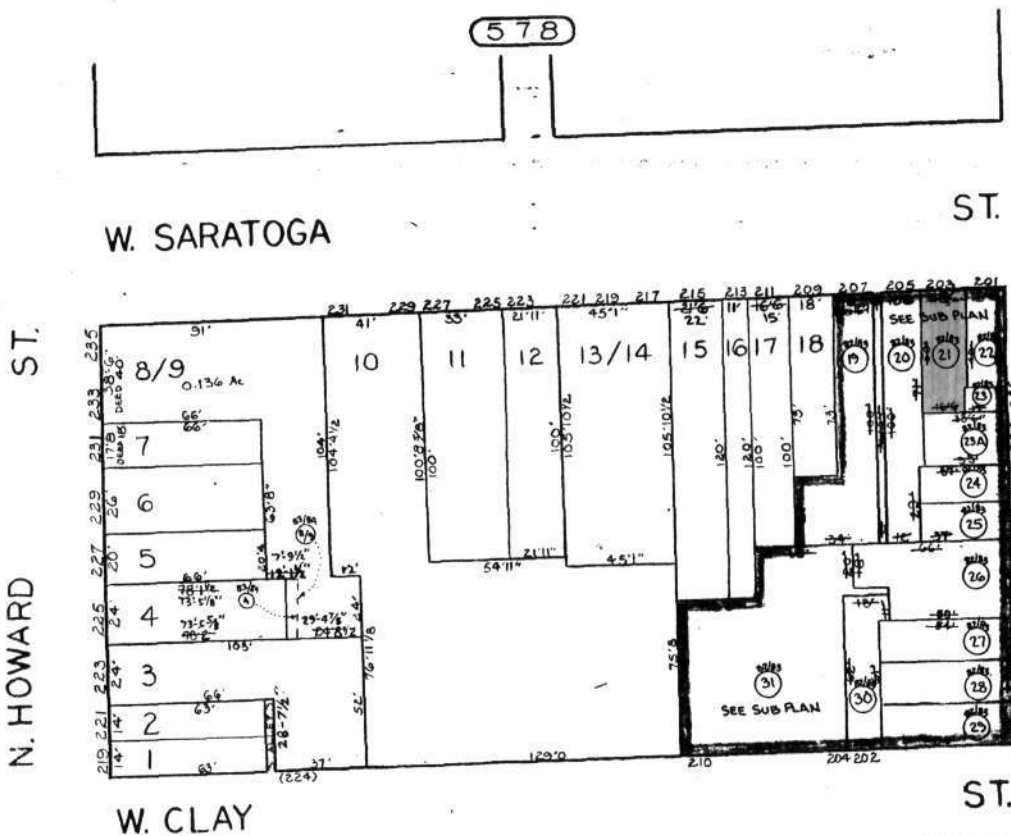
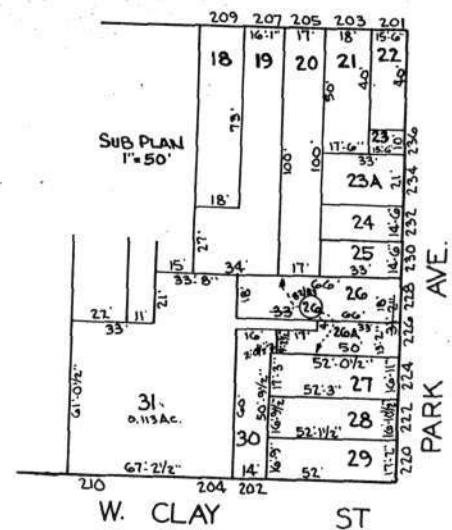
Historic Function and Use:

Commercial/Residential

Known Design Source:  
None

## REVISIONS

LOTS 15, 17, 20, & 23A THRU 31 PER DEEDS CH. 54-83-402 & 83-403  
 LOTS 4 & 8/9 CONSID & DIV PER DEED C.S.H. 84-382



PARK AVE.

ST.

W. CLAY

W. SARATOGA

N. HOWARD ST.

ST.

## NOTICE

THIS IS A REAL PROPERTY PLAT AS PROVIDED FOR UNDER ARTICLE 76(d) OF THE CITY CHARTER IT IS COMPILED FROM TITLE AND OTHER SOURCES AND IS NOT AN AUTHENTIC SURVEY.

CITY OF BALTIMORE  
 DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC WORKS

PROPERTY LOCATION DIVISION

WARD 4 SECTION 10  
 BLOCK 597

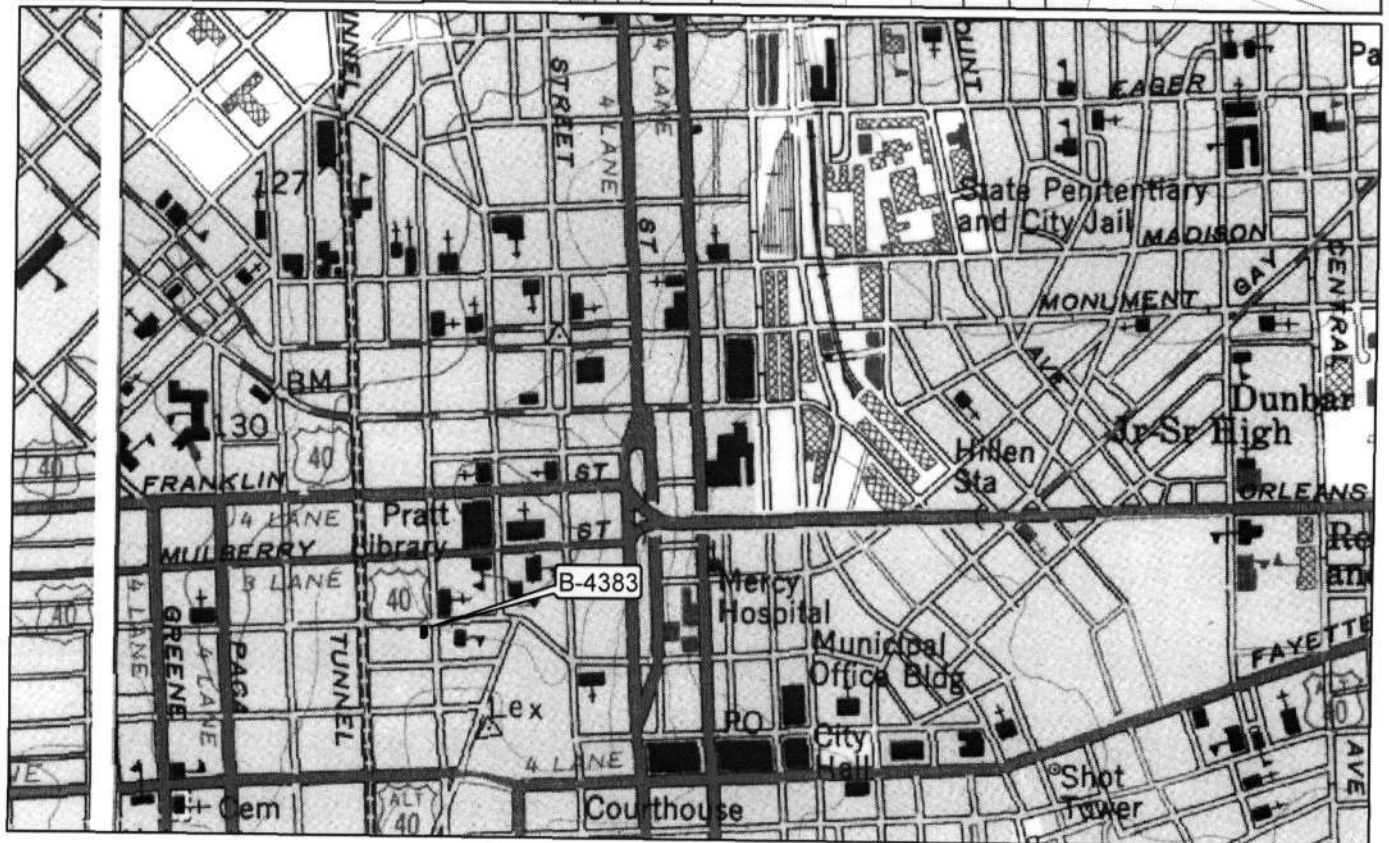
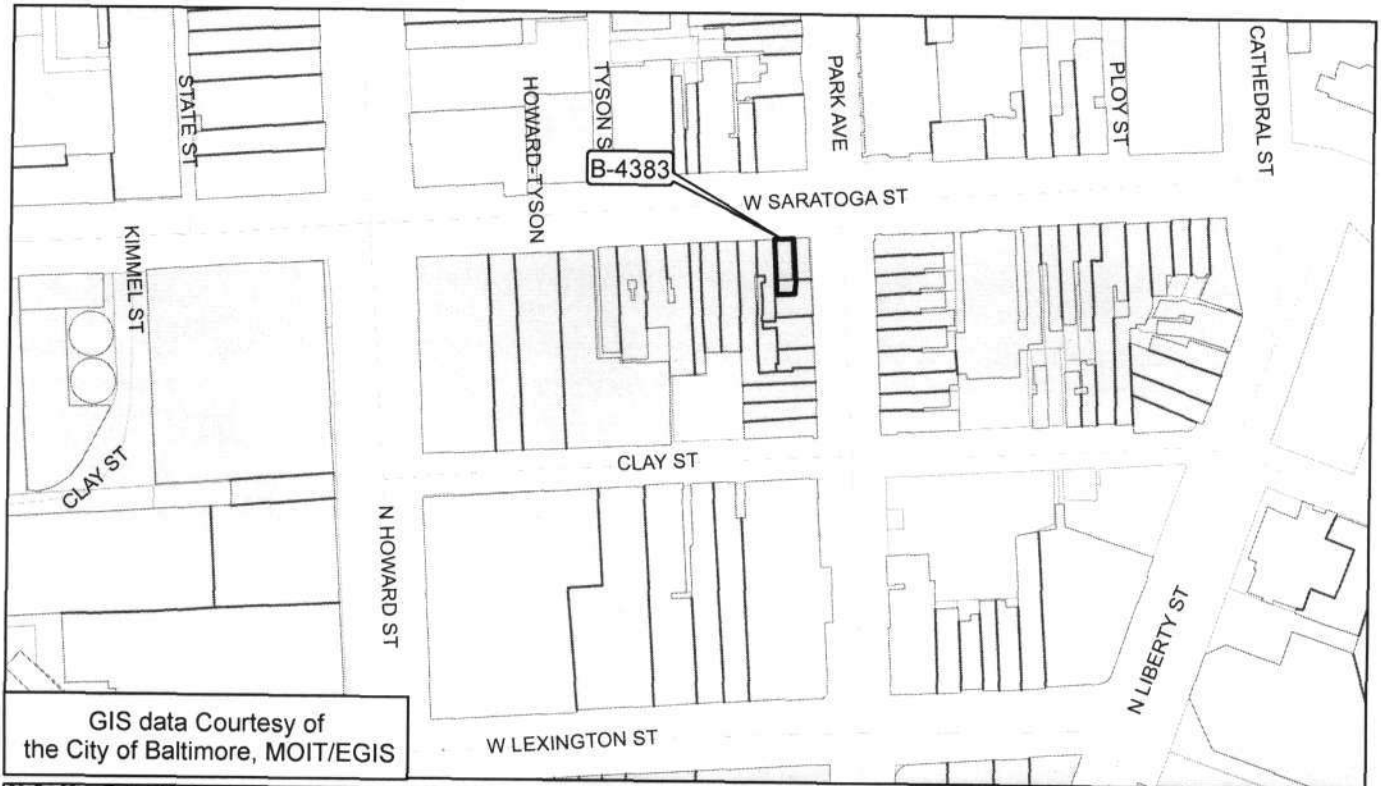
SCALE 1"=50' DATE Nov. 1966

DRAWN BY: P.L.W.

CHECKED BY: P.L.W.

APPROVED BY:

B-4383  
Top Dog Custom Jewelry  
203 W. Saratoga Street  
Block 0597, Lot 021  
Baltimore City  
Baltimore East Quad.







B-4383

203 W. Saratoga St.

Baltimore MD

Diane Shaw

8/91

Maryland SHPO

Facade, north elevation

1/2



B-4383

201-227 W. Saratoga (block)

Baltimore MD

Diane Shaw

8/91

Maryland SHPO

Block of 201-227 W Saratoga, north side

2/2